



Great American Rail-Trail marker in Council Bluffs, IA.

## Your New Historic Marker: Installation, Dedication, Maintenance, and Cleaning Tips

### Marker Installation

As our grant recipient you've already identified your marker's location and received permission for installation. When arranging its physical placement consider the marker's exposure to salt and debris from passing vehicles and snowplows. Do not install the marker too close to the road (we recommend ten feet back). It should be readable but far enough back to protect its condition.

Please install your marker perpendicular to the roadway whenever possible to maximize readability from both directions of travel.

Before installing your marker, be sure you are following all of your state's guidelines around digging and excavation. Call 811 to check with local utility companies before digging.

Outlined below are the supplies and steps needed for standard installation. While the exact process may vary by location, consult the following instructions for guidance when installing your marker:

### Supply List:

- set screws
- post hole digger (or auger)
- pointed shovel
- small trowel
- $\frac{1}{8}$ " Allen wrench
- utility knife
- rake and level
- concrete (check the bag for coverage per hole size)
- something to mix the concrete in and tool for mixing (e.g. wheel barrow and garden hoe)
- a hose (if accessible) or jugs/buckets of water
- 3 wooden stakes and 3 straps
- Optional: 5 gallon bucket with bottom removed to create raised concrete curb



Ohio's Black Civil War Soldier's marker in Troy, OH.

### Marker Installation Instructions

- Using a post hole digger (or auger) dig a hole 12" wide and 30-36" deep.
- Pour dry concrete mix into the hole to bring the depth to 24".
- With a level, set the pole in the prepared hole and hold straight upright by using wooden stakes and straps in a triangular pattern.
- Mix the concrete and water to manufacturer's specifications in a tub, bucket, or wheel barrow.
- Carefully pour the mixed concrete in the hole, periodically agitating it to help the concrete settle. Continue until the concrete has filled the hole.
- Extend the concrete a few inches above ground to protect the posts from mowers, etc. You can do this by cutting the bottom off of a 5 gallon bucket and using it as a mold for the concrete.
- Check to be sure the pole is straight upright using a level and make any necessary adjustments.
- Using a small trowel, smooth the concrete around the pole for a clean, finished look.
- Allow concrete to cure according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Install your marker on the pole (see tips on the next page) and remove any stakes and bracing.
- Clean up the disturbed area and spread top soil and grass seed if needed. You can even add some flowers or a small garden bed at the base.
- Enjoy your new Pomeroy Foundation historic marker!

## Preventing Marker/Pole Corrosion

As community landscapes change there may be instances when your marker needs to be temporarily moved or relocated. If that time comes you don't want to be in a situation where the marker and pole have corroded together.

- To limit decay simply drape a piece of plastic over the top of the pole before mounting the marker. Leave the plastic in place on the pole and install the marker. Once the screws of the mount are tightened carefully trim off excess plastic at the marker base, making sure not to slice into the pole's coating. This is an effective way to keep the metal surfaces from rusting together, while making marker removal from the pole easier, if ever needed in the future.

## Deterring Unauthorized Removal

On rare occasions markers are reported missing or stolen. To help ensure your marker is secured in place consider taking the following step at the end of the installation process:

- Once the marker is mounted to the pole you can make the screws "theft resistant." To do so, use a drill bit to round out the hex on the inside of the set screws. If the marker needs to be removed after this the set screws will need to be drilled out. This is a simple way to help deter theft.

## Marker Cleaning

Scrubbing your marker with a mild mix of soap and water will extend its life. Wet a non-metal scrub brush with the soapy mix and gently clean each side of the marker. Start at the top and work down to the marker base. Use a soft toothbrush for detailed cleaning around raised lettering, logos, and trim.

- Make plans to clean your marker twice a year: once in the spring and once during late autumn. By doing so you will regularly remove layers of road salt, dust, pollen, tree sap and other contaminants, which otherwise would degrade your marker's protective coating over time.
- When possible schedule your spring cleaning to coincide with National Historic Marker Weekend, celebrated the last weekend of every April. For details about volunteering and registering your marker cleaning project visit: [wgpfoundation.org](http://wgpfoundation.org)



Patriot Burials marker in Augusta, KY.



Trolley Station marker in Jordan, NY.



Lafayette's Tour marker in Newport, NH.

## Planning a Marker Dedication Ceremony

Once your marker is installed consider planning a marker dedication ceremony. These events are family-friendly, educational, and they provide positive exposure for your organization and community. Your dedication program might include talks, tours, reenactments, performances, and more. While the possibilities are endless for dedications, event organizers are welcome to use this sample agenda for guidance.

### **SAMPLE AGENDA**

#### Marker is Covered

Coordinate who will unveil the marker prior to the event.

Marker may be covered with a sheet or piece of fabric.

#### Opening Remarks

Often delivered by the event host.

Introduce and provide context about the marker dedication.

Welcome attendees and acknowledge special guests.

#### Main Remarks

Provide details about the subject being commemorated.

Collaborating organizations should also have time to speak.

#### Pomeroy Foundation Remarks

Remarks provided by the Foundation are read by event host if a Foundation representative cannot attend.

#### Marker is Unveiled

Marker cover is removed.

#### Closing Remarks

Event organizer or designee often shares a few additional words.

This is a good time to invite guests to a post-event reception if one is held.

#### Photo Time

Take group and individual photos with the marker. These should include organizers, guests, etc.

Snap photos of just the marker (straight on shots and ones with the marker and its surroundings).

## Promote Your Dedication

Marker dedications can attract local, regional, and even national news coverage which build excitement and public interest. Invite the media and send a press release at least two weeks prior to your event. Be sure to notify the Pomeroy Foundation about the dedication ceremony as far in advance as possible -ideally at least one month ahead of time.

## Let's Connect on Social Media

The Pomeroy Foundation regularly posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Like and follow us @wgpfoundation across all three platforms. Social media is an excellent way to enhance exposure for markers and dedication ceremonies. We want to engage with your content so remember to tag or mention the Pomeroy Foundation in your posts.